

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSC-01 JUSE-00 HEW-04 INT-05 LAB-04

OMB-01 TRSE-00 EPA-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 AGRE-00

COME-00 DOTE-00 STR-07 EB-08 DOE-15 SOE-02

NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 SIL-01 /099 W

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O 052103Z APR 78

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9665

INFO AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

AMCONSUL NICE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 11292

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, FR

SUBJECT: THE NEW GOVERNMENT OF FRANCE -- BARRE III

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. THE NEW GOVERNMENT NAMED 5 APRIL IS AS FOLLOWS:

PRIME MINISTER- RAYMOND BARRE (UDF)

MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND KEEPER OF THE SELS - ALAIN

PERREFITTE (PR)

MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY AFFAIRS - SIMONE VEIL

(UDF)

MINISTER OF INTERIOR - CHRISTIAN BONNET (UDF)

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS - LOUIS DE GUIRINGAUD

MINISTER OF DEFENSE - YVON BOURGES (RPR)

MINISTER OF LABOR AND PARTICIPATION - ROBERT BOULIN

(RPR)

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MINISTER OF COOPERATION - ROBERT GALLEY (RPR)

MINISTER OF ECONOMY - RENE MONORY (UDF)

MINISTER OF BUDGET - MAURICE PAPON (RPR)

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE - MICHEL

D'ORNANO (UDF)

MINISTER OF EDUCATION - CHRISTIAN BEULLAC (UDF)

MINISTER OF UNIVERSITIES - ALICE SAUNIER SEITE (UDF)

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE - PIERRE EHAIGNERIE (UDF)
MINISTER OF INDUSTRY - ANDRE GIRAUD
MINISTER OF TRANSPORT - JOEL LE THEULE (RPR)
MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND HANDICRAFTS - JACQUES BARROT
(UDF)
MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE - JEAN FRANCOIS DENIAU (UDF)
MINISTER OF YOUTH, SPORTS AND TOURISM - JEAN PIERRE
SOISSON (UDF)
MINISTER OF CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION - JEAN PHILIPPE
LECAT (UDF)
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR POSTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS -
NORBERT SERGARD (UDF)
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR VETERANS AFFAIRS - MAURICE
PLANTIER (RPR)

2. BARRE III CONTINUITY. OF THE 22 APPOINTMENTS
(20 MINISTERS, 2 AUTONOMOUS SECRETARIES OF STATE), 10
WERE REAPPOINTED TO THE SAME JOBS - THE PRIME MINISTER,
MINISTERS OF JUSTICE, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, INTERIOR,
DEFENSE, HEALTH, UNIVERSITIES, COOPERATION, AGRICULTURE,
AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR POSTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS.
FOUR MINISTERS CHANGED JOBS - MONORY, BEULLAC, BOULIN
AND D'ORNANO, AND TWO SECRETARIES OF STATE WERE
PROMOTED TO MINISTERS - BARROT AND DENIAU. THUS, OUT
OF THE 22 NAMES ANNOUNCED, 16 WERE IN THE PRIOR
GOVERNMENT.
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3. THE NEW FACES: OF THE SIX "NEW FACES," FOUR ARE
WELL KNOWN. JEAN-PIERRE SOISSON, MINISTER FOR YOUTH,
SPORTS AND TOURISM, DEPUTY AND MAYOR OF AUXERRE, HAS
BEEN SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PRESIDENT'S REPUBLICAN
PARTY FOR THE LAST 10 MONTHS. JEAN-PIERRE LECAT,
MINISTER FOR CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION, WAS UNTIL
RECENTLY, SPOKESMAN AT THE ELYSEE AND HAS SERVED AS
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INFORMATION. JOEL LE THEULE,
MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT, NEWLY RE-ELECTED RPR DEPUTY
FROM THE SARTHE, HAS PREVIOUSLY SERVED AS MINISTER OF
OVERSEAS TERRITORIES AND DEPARTMENTS (1968) AND IS
PRIMARILY KNOWN FOR HIS EXPERTISE ON DEFENSE MATTERS.
MAURICE PAPON (RPR), MINISTER FOR BUDGET, HAS BEEN A
DEPUTY SINCE 1968 AND HAS ESTABLISHED A GOOD REPUTATION
FOR HIS DILIGENT WORK IN THE FINANCE COMMISSION IN THE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. THE NEW MINISTER OF INDUSTRY,
ANDRE GIRAUD, IS A NON-POLITICAL NUCLEAR SCIENTIST,
WITH EXPERIENCE IN ENERGY AND AERO-SPACE MATTERS.
MAURICE PLANTIER, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR VETERANS
AFFAIRS, IS A NEWLY RE-ELECTED RPR DEPUTY AND MEDICAL
DOCTOR. HE IS AN OLD GAULLIST, HAVING FIRST BEEN

ELECTED IN 1958 -- FROM CAMEROON. BIO DATA ON ALL NEW
APPOINTEES WILL FOLLOW.

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4. OF THE 22 APPOINTEES, 7 ARE RPR (PEYREFITTE,
BOURGES, BOULIN, GALLEY, PAPON, LE THEULE AND
PLANTIER), 2 HAVE NO KNOWN POLITICAL AFFILIATION
(GUIRINGAUD, GIRAUD) AND THE REMAINING 13 ARE UDF
(3 CDS, 5 PR, 5 PRESIDENTIAL MAJORITY). NO RADICAL
SOCIALISTS WERE NAMED. THE AVERAGE AGE IS 50, AND
ONLY TWO WOMEN (BOTH IN THE FORMER GOVERNMENT) WERE
INCLUDED, SIMONE VEIL AND ALICE SAUNIER-SEITE, THE
LATTER DESPITE HER LOSS IN THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS.

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5. COMMENT: THE NEW CABINET IS CHARACTERIZED BY
STABILITY AND CONTINUITY. THE MAIN SURPRISE WAS THE
LACK OF CHANGE, GIVEN THE BACKGROUND OF GISCARD'S
CONSULTATIONS OVER THE LAST TWO WEEKS WITH OPPOSITION
AND LABOR LEADERS AND GIVEN THE CHABAN-DELMAS/EDGAR
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FAURE BATTLE (REPRESENTING THE TWO MAIN CURRENTS IN THE MAJORITY) IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR THE PRESIDENCY. WHILE NO ONE EXPECTED A SHARP BREAK WITH THE PAST, AND IN FACT GISCARD REJECTED SHORTLY AFTER THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS ANY RAIDING OF OPPOSITION RANKS, MOST OBSERVERS EXPECTED AT LEAST A LARGER DOSE OF TECHNICIANS, UNIVERSITY OR OTHER NON-POLITICAL FIGURES. IN THIS SENSE, THE NEW CABINET PRESENTS FEWER NEW FACES AND MORE OLD ONES THAN EXPECTED. AND THE NEW FACES WHICH ARE INCLUDED CAN BE ATTRIBUTED MAINLY TO THE FACT THAT THERE ARE FIVE MORE MINISTERS NOW THAN IN THE SECOND BARRE CABINET, BRINGING THE TOTAL TO A PRESENT STRENGTH OF TWENTY (PLUS TWO STATE SECRETARIES).

6. GIVEN THIS VERY LIMITED CHANGE, COMMENTATORS WILL BE FORCED TO LOOK FOR ANY SIGNIFICANCE IN THE NEW LINE-UP IN THE TECHNICAL (BUT NOT UNIMPORTANT) CHANGES AND IN THE RELATIVE WEIGHT OF THE VARIOUS MAJORITY PARTIES WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT. THE ATTRIBUTION OF MANY MINISTRIES HAS CHANGED SLIGHTLY, BUT SPLITTING THE FORMER MINISTRY OF ECONOMY AND FINANCE INTO SEPARATE MINISTRIES OF ECONOMY AND BUDGET IS MORE SUBSTANTIVE. PRIME MINISTER BARRE DESCRIBED THIS CHANGE IN A STATEMENT ON THE EVENING OF APRIL 5 AS AN EFFORT TO EASE THE HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY ON THE FORMER MINISTER AND TIED THIS CHANGE TO HIS OVERALL EFFORT TO REDRESS THE ECONOMY. THE OLD MINISTRY HAD BEEN CRITICIZED FROM MANY SIDES AS BEING TOO POWERFUL AND A BUREAUCRATIC OCTOPUS. ITS DIVISION INTO TWO IS AIMED AT BETTER CONTROL OVER ITS FUNCTIONS -- BUDGET CONCERNED WITH STATE FINANCE AND ECONOMY WITH PLANNING AND POLICY. WHILE BARRE NO LONGER KEEPS HIS PORTFOLIO FOR FINANCE AND ECONOMY, HE SAID ALMOST NONCHALANTLY THAT HE WILL

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NOT BE DISINTERESTED IN THE IMPORTANT AREA. TRANSLATION: HE CAN BE COUNTED ON TO RETAIN GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ECONOMY AND TO FOLLOW THIS SUBJECT CLOSELY.

7. THE PRIME MINISTER CONTINUED THAT A SECOND FOCUS OF THE NEW TEAM WOULD BE ITS SOCIAL POLICY, AND IN THIS CONTEXT HE DREW SPECIAL ATTENTION TO BOULIN AS THE MINISTER OF LABOR AND PARTICIPATION. HE DESCRIBED BOULIN'S JOB AS ONE OF PROMOTING A BETTER SOCIAL

CLIMATE AND BOULIN HIMSELF AS A MAN WHO KNOWS HOW FAR HE CAN GO WITHOUT EXCEEDING THE LIMITS THAT THE COUNTRY CAN AFFORD IN WORKING TOWARD THIS GOAL. BOULIN'S PERSONAL PRESTIGE AND THE ATTENTION BARRE DREW TO HIM MAY HINT THAT THIS MINISTRY WILL PLAY A BIGGER ROLE IN GOV POLICY AND COULD REOPEN INITIATIVES SUCH AS OUT-LINED IN THE SUDREAU REPORT FOR CORPORATE REFORM. A FINAL POINT, PICKING UP ON A THIRD RECENT GISCARDIAN THEME, WAS ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM WITH RESPECT TO THE INDUSTRIES OF EQUIPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE. EQUIPMENT, THE MAJOR SOURCE OF GOVERNMENT LARGESSE, DISAPPEARED BUT ITS PATRONAGE WILL BE ASSUMED BY THE FAITHFUL GISCARDIAN, MICHEL D'ORNANO.

8. THE RPR WILL FIND A FEW BONES TO GNAW ON BUT THE NEW LINE-UP IS TOO FRUGAL FOR ITS APPETITE TO BE SATISFIED. THE MOST VISABLE GUAGE OF RPR REACTION IS ITS NUMBER OF MINISTRIES, WHICH NCREASED FROM FOUR TO SIX. IN THIS RESPECT, RR CRITICISM MAY BE BLUNTED. LESS SATISFYING TO JACQUES CHIRAC WILL BE THE INDIVIDUAL REPUTATIONS OF THE R MINISTERS, NONE

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OF WHOM IS VERY CLOSE TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE GAULLIST MOVEMENT. PEYREFITTE, GALLEY, BOULIN, BOURGES AND LE THEULE ARE ALL LONG-STANDING GAULLISTS BUT THEY ARE NOT DIE-HARDS, BARONS OR EVEN CHIRACIAN YOUNG TURKS. SOME ARE OUT-RIGHT CHABANISTS, WHICH COMING ONE DAY AFTER THE VOTE FOR PRESIDENT OF THE PARLIAMENT IS ANOTHER BITTER PILL FOR CHIRAC TO SWALLOW.

9. THE RPR HAD CAMPAIGNED DURING THE ELECTORAL PERIOD FOR MORE ENERGETIC GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS, IMPLYING OF COURSE A CERTAIN NUMBER OF NEW FACES IN THE GOF, DIRECTED TOWARD INVESTMENT INCENTIVES AND AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT. THE SPLITTING OF THE FINANCE MINISTRY MEETS ONE OF ITS LONG-STANDING PROPOSALS; IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF THIS ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM WILL LEAD TO THE POLICY CHANGES IT IMPLIES. PARTICIPATION, MADE AN EXPLICIT PART OF THE LABOR MINISTRY, WILL WARM THE HEARTS OF OLD-LINE GAULLISTS FOR ITS SYMBOLIC VALUE, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND MAY EVEN AUGURE A NEW GOF POLICY EMPHASIS.

10. DESPITE THE PROBABLY LUKEWARM RECEPTION THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL RECEIVE BY NUMEROUS OBSERVERS, ONE CAN AT LEAST SAY THAT BARRE WILL HAVE AN EXPERIENCED, COHERENT, TECHNICALLY COMPETENT TEAM. IN FAIRNESS TO GISCARD AND BARRE, ONE DID NOT EXPECT MUCH OF AN "OPENING" THROUGH NOMINATIONS TO MINISTERIAL POSTS. THEIR OPENING WILL MORE LIKELY BE PROGRAMMATIC, AND GRADUAL AT THAT. THUS, IN THEIR FIRST GOVERNMENT AFTER LAST MONTHS LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS, GISCARD AND BARRE HAVE PLAYED IT SAFE, STICKING WITH TRIED AND TRUE PROFESSIONALS WHO HAVE SERVED THEM WELL IN THE PAST AND WHO CAN BE COUNTED ON TO SERVE LOYALLY IN THE FUTURE. THE IMBALANCE BETWEEN UDF AND RPR HAS BEEN REDUCED SOMEWHAT AND WHILE THERE HAS BEEN AT LEAST A ROYAL DISTRIBUTION OF REWARDS, THE NEW GOF DEFINITELY TILTS TOWARD GISCARDIAN. THE HUE OF EVEN THOSE WHO ARE NEW, INCLUDING THE NON-POLITICALS IS IN THIS DIRECTION. THE SECRETARIES OF STATE TO BE NAMED TOMORROW, MAY CHANGE THE BALANCE SOMEWHAT, BUT THE MAIN LINES ARE ALREADY WELL-SET BY THE PRINCIPALS AND SUBSEQUENT ADJUSTMENT AT THE LOWER LEVEL CAN ONLY BE JUST THAT.
HARTMAN

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Message Attributes

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